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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JULY 15, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for July 15, 2005.

Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

1. EKSPRES: CHP (Republican People's Party) Seyhan district's Women Branch Chairperson complained that few women were able to serve as candidates in last weekend's elections, which were held to nominate district delegates and candidates for the district chairpersons of CHP in Adana (see press summary 07/11).

2. BOLGE: Mersin Port Workers are continuing to protest against the privatization process launched for the port. The workers, who are members of Liman-Is (Union of Port Workers), started a strike and did not leave their workplace yesterday.

3. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): The Hatay Municipality rejected the appeal of South Korean Protestants to obtain a license to officially name a church, which Protestants established in Hatay as a "place of worship." It did so on the grounds that there were currently no Protestants living in Hatay. A religious officer from South Korea has been assigned to the church and worship has started following permission from the Hatay Governor. Tradesmen in the neighboring environs, however, are reportedly disturbed that fifty children are visiting the church daily, reports the paper.

4. OZGUR GUNDEM: The Ministry of Environment and Forests, upon seeing the risks, such as injuries, deaths and health hazards involved in its Iraqi scrap weaponry importing, stopped importing Iraqi scrap. Following the decision, forty trucks waiting to enter Turkey at the Habur border gate were returned back to their points of origin.

5. OZGUR GUNDEM: Anthrax was diagnosed in two people and a state of quarantine was imposed in Elazig's Karakocan district.

6. OZGUR GUNDEM: The Dortyol Jandarma Command in Hatay conducted an operation in the Dortyol district and discovered a field where Indian hemp was being cultivated. The Jandarma burned all the plants they seized.

7. OZGUR GUNDEM: Eighteen thousand people have applied to the Governor's Office in Diyarbakir to benefit from the Compensation Law for Losses Caused by Anti-Terror Activities to date. 248 of the 368 applications examined in the last month were rejected, and the government has paid a total of one trillion New Turkish liras to the rest. People are reportedly frustrated with the amounts settled by the commission and will resort to legal means to receive "fair" amounts.

8. CUMHURİYET/ZAMAN/OZGUR GUNDEM/HURRIYET: The PKK/Kongra-Gel terrorist organization reportedly told the Mesopotamian News agency that military operations, which were intensified in Tunceli following the kidnapping of private Coskun Kirandi, were placing the soldier's life in danger. The PKK reportedly called the family of Kirandi to voice their demands to end military operations in the region. Meanwhile, DEHAP National Chairperson Tuncer Bakirhan demanded that private Kirandi be released.

9. OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir called for cooperation among the Kurdish and Turkish intelligentsia to end the conflict in the southeastern region.

10. OZGUR GUNDEM: The Turkish Parliament's commission for probing fuel oil smuggling, have already revealed that many companies, which are bound to export petroleum coming from Iraq back to Iraq after processing it in the Iskenderun and Mersin provinces, were instead selling part of the petroleum in internal markets of Turkey. The commission demands opening of investigations against a list of suspected companies, but allegedly omits TPIC (Turkish Petroleum International Company) from this list. TPIC is reportedly a company established upon the advice issued by the National Security Council, and it has allegedly become the hotbed of fuel oil smuggling in the course of time.

11. HURRIYET/ZAMAN: The Van Security Directorate's Smuggling and Organized Crime Branch conducted a search at the Yuzuncu Yil University's rector's house in Van and found 240 pieces of

historical and archaeological artifacts. The rector was in Azerbaijan during the search of the security officers.

¶12. CUMHURIYET: The Dicle Subgovernor said that a ceremony to commemorate the killing of seven people in 1994 in Ugrak village by (alleged) PKK terrorists would be held on Saturday.

¶13. HURRIYET: The number of PKK terrorists coming in to Turkey from the Qandil Mountains in Iraq is reported as 700. Turkey wants to see the U.S. conducting operations against PKK camps in Qandil Mountain, whereas the U.S. says it can only provide intelligence on this issue.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

¶1. EKSPRES: The TMO (Turkish Grain Board) began to sell corn in its supply for a lesser price per kilogram than it has bought corn on the open market a year ago from the farmers, in order to free up storage space for new wheat purchases.

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